

CD 2004--58



Thursday, April 1, 2004
12:10 pm. Walter Hall

Thursdays at Noon
presents

MUSIC AND POETRY

Introduction by Prof. Eric Domville

The Rising Fire
(Poems by Gwendolyn MacEwen)

Erik Ross
(b. 1972)

- I. Catalogues of Memory
- II. Universe And
- III. Black and White

Matthew Leigh, *baritone*
Ryan Scott, *marimba*

Three settings from **A Sunbeam's Architecture**
Lust (William Shakespeare)
Rationalists (Wallace Stevens)
Long-legged Fly (W.B. Yeats)

John Hawkins
(b. 1944)

Matthew Leigh, *baritone*
Mary-Beth Brown and Marcin Swoboda, *violins*
Alex McLeod, *viola*
Rafael Kuerti, *cello*
Ryan Scott, *drum-set, güiro, marimba*

Biographies

Eric Domville is a Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Toronto. His main scholarly interest is the life and works of W.B. Yeats. He is also a writer, lecturer and broadcaster on opera. Currently he is co-teaching a graduate course on Russian song and opera in the Faculty of Music. Prof. Domville has appeared numerous times as a commentator for the Music and Poetry series.

Pianist and composer **John Hawkins** has taught in the Theory and Composition Division at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto since 1970. He has composed over 25 works for various media. He received the 1983 (Governor General) Jules Léger Prize for new chamber music. Prof. Hawkins organizes and performs in the interdisciplinary Music and Poetry lecture/concert series, now in its ninth season, which features vocal music of the last hundred years and has also composed a number of works especially for this series. Just recently a concert of Hawkins' instrumental music was given in honour of his upcoming 60th birthday.

Matthew Leigh began his musical training in his home town of Pembroke, Ontario. After studying piano and voice for six years he began vocal studies with Patricia Kern at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. He has performed several times in the Music and Poetry series. Matthew's stage credits include Emilio Picariello from John Estacio's *Filumena*, Maximilian in *Candide*, the speaker from *Die Zauberflöte*, Guglielmo in *Così Fan Tutte*, and Lockit from *The Beggar's Opera*. Matthew is currently in the Opera Diploma programme studying with Peter Barnes.

Poet **Gwendolyn MacEwen** was born in Toronto in 1941. Her first published poem appeared in the *Canadian Forum* when she was seventeen. She left school at eighteen to concentrate on her writing. Her work is included in most major Canadian anthologies. MacEwen was Writer-in Residence at the University of Western Ontario in 1984-85 and at the University of Toronto in 1986-87. She died in November of 1987.

Erik Ross composes for all media. His *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra* was premiered by Joseph Salvalaggio and the Memphis Symphony in January 2003 and will be performed again this summer at the International Double Reed Society Conference in Melbourne Australia. Recent works include a *Piano Trio* for the Gryphon Trio and an operetta for Tapestry New Opera Works. Upcoming pieces include a work for saxophonist Wallace Halladay, a duet for ArpaTambora (Sanya Eng and Ryan Scott), and a chamber work for the Lee-Villanueva Duo for a projected Mexican tour.

Ryan Scott is an acclaimed percussionist and marimbist specializing in solo and chamber works of new music. He plays with many groups including the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, New Music Concerts, the Composers' Orchestra, the Bob Becker Ensemble, and the Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan. Mr. Scott has been a guest artist several times with the renowned percussion ensemble NEXUS. With his wife, Sanya Eng, he also plays in ArpaTambora, an innovative duo of harp and percussion. Mr. Scott earned a masters degree in music from the University of Toronto where his principal teachers were Russell Hartenberger and Robin Engelman.

The Rising Fire

I. *The Catalogues of Memory*

now in our distorted distances
the ignorant ships
kiss and pass

love we have learned nothing
we have learned
nothing
not in the slated nights
not in the chalkboard cities

Jesus, Nietzsche, call them
and they will not come for you
though your hair is on fire
from the brain beneath it burning

love we have learned nothing
we have learned
nothing
not on the gold island
not on the washed beaches

we were two ships of burning glass
we were two ships of burning glass

now in our distorted distances
the ignorant ships
kiss
and pass

II. Universe And

something we know of mountains
and craters within craters-
big braille under a blind God's hands,

space; our little timorous temples turn
inward, our introverted temples
turn as the flyer hoists our vision
higher.

on earth the machines of our myth
grind down, grind slowly now, rusting
the wheels of human sense;

we drink white milk while
high galactic fields open
their floodgates open

and the terrible laughter of our children
is heard in that pocket, that high
white place above our thunder

III. *Black and White*

you wore it you wore the night
strapped like black wings to your white
arm you came as in an inverse film
of bright alarm and darkening will
of knees which crashed the sheets
of shoulders which descended
and
descended down and crashed from flight
in interchanging black and white.

crash crash fly down bird fly down
in bright absurd alarm as the dove
the bird at the loins the love
plummets down to me and
now fly down black and white fly down
beacon and the brilliant knees
oh
dark outrageous anchoring and the beauty of it

All text from *The Rising Fire* by Gwendolyn MacEwen (1941-1987).

LUST

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and, till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.

All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

Sonnet 129

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

RATIONALISTS

Rationalists, wearing square hats,
Think, in square rooms,
Looking at the floor,
Looking at the ceiling.
They confine themselves
To right-angled triangles.
If they tried rhomboids,
Cones, waving lines, ellipses-
As, for example, the ellipse of the half-moon-
Rationalists would wear sombreros.

Wallace Stevens (1879-1955)

LONG-LEGGED FLY

That civilisation may not sink,
Its great battle lost,
Quiet the dog, tether the pony
To a distant post;
Our master Caesar is in the tent
Where the maps are spread,
His eyes fixed upon nothing,
A hand under his head.
Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
His mind moves upon silence.

That the topless towers be burnt
And men recall that face,
Move most gently if move you must
In this lonely place.
She thinks, part woman, three parts a child,
That nobody looks; her feet
Practise a tinker shuffle
Picked up on a street.
Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
Her mind moves upon silence.

That girls at puberty may find
The first Adam in their thought,
Shut the door of the Pope's chapel,
Keep those children out.
There on the scaffolding reclines
Michael Angelo.
With no more sound than the mice make
His hand moves to and fro.
Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
His mind moves upon silence.

W.B. Yeats (1865-1939)